



AGENCY: City Council/MID
MEETING DATE: May 8, 2017
DEPARTMENT: Administration
PRESENTED BY: L. Ruffing
EMAIL ADDRESS: LRuffing@fortbragg.com

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

TITLE:

RECEIVE REPORT AND SOLICIT PUBLIC INPUT REGARDING HOW TO IMPROVE THE CIVILITY OF DISCOURSE IN PUBLIC FORUMS IN OUR COMMUNITY

ISSUE:

At the City Council Retreat on April 8, 2017, the Council identified improved community relations as a priority goal. Much of the Council's discussion centered around a shared interest in improving the civility of public discourse at City Council meetings (as well as on social media sites and throughout the community). The Council directed that this item be agendized to solicit input from community members after which the Finance & Administration Committee will work to assemble recommended "rules of order" for Council meetings and a possible "code of civility" for Council consideration.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

This item is agendized to receive public input. No action will be taken.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

Not applicable.

ANALYSIS:

Over the past few years, the tenor of public discourse in Fort Bragg (and across the nation) has become markedly less civil. Listening to the public is an essential component of the Council's decision-making process and disagreements and debate are fundamental to a healthy democracy. However, personal attacks and disrespectful behavior harm the democratic process and undermine our sense of community.

The Council is interested in hearing from community members about how to enhance the level of public discourse in debates about community issues and how to positively influence those who are uncivil. How can we best work together to discourage personal attacks and incivility in our public debates?

FISCAL IMPACT:

None.

IMPLEMENTATION/TIMEFRAMES:

The June Finance & Administration Committee meeting will include agenda items addressing City Council rules of order and a code of civility. The recommendations of the Finance & Administration Committee will be brought forward to the Council for consideration in late June or July.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Speak Your Peace, "The Civility Project" Vision Statement – provided by Councilmember Will Lee.

NOTIFICATION:

1. None.

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Agency Action ☐ Approved ☐ Denied ☐ Approved as Amended

Resolution No.: _____ Ordinance No.: _____

Moved by: _____ Seconded by: _____

Vote: _____

☐ Deferred/Continued to meeting of: _____

☐ Referred to: _____